



What Curriculum Materials are High Performing Charter Schools Using?

**Office of Education Improvement and Innovation
Public School Academies Unit**

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To learn what curriculum materials high performing charter schools are using, the PSA Unit sampled a cross section of Michigan charter schools ranked in the top 40% using Michigan's Top to Bottom Ranking. We asked curriculum coordinators and principals to identify what books they were using in kindergarten through grade eight. They were also asked to identify websites or supplemental materials they were using. The last section of this report provides resources which will help schools select new curriculum materials aligned to the CCSS.

The following tables show the materials used by three or more schools. In the thirty schools visited, there was a plethora of reading programs, with more consensus in other subjects. For some of the specialized schools, such as Montessori and SABIS, they were more likely to use materials produced by their program and management company.

Reading

Reading Series	Publisher	Grade level
Daily 5™ (cited by more schools than any other reading program)	Stenhouse Publisher	All Grades
Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series	Houghton Mifflin	All
Words Their Way	Pearson	All
Little Leveled Readers, Saxon Phonics, Saxon Spelling	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	Primarily K-2
Reading A-Z	Learning A-Z	Primarily K-3
Reading Street	Scott Foresman	K-5
DRA's (Determined leveled Readers), Leveled Readers, and Lexile Readers	Scholastic, Reading A-Z, Scott Foresman/Pearson, McGraw Hill Harcourt	All
Read Naturally: Read Naturally Publisher	Read Naturally Publisher	primarily 3-5
Open Court Reading: McGraw Hill	McGraw Hill	K-5
Treasures Reading	Macmillan/McGraw-Hill	K-3
Orton Gillingham: Reading and Language Arts Centers, Phonics First, Structures for Reading and Spelling	Orton Gillingham	K-5
Literature: Reading with Purpose and Readers Choice	Glencoe/McGraw Hill	All Grades
Voyages in English Writing and Grammar	Loyola Press	3-8
Spelling	Macmillan/McGraw-Hill	All
Guiding Readers and Writers	Fountas and Pinnell	All Grades
Language of Literature	McDougal Littell	6-8
Timeless Voices/Timeless Themes Literature Series and Resources: Prentice Hall	Prentice Hall	7-8
Wordly Wise 300: Literacy and Intervention Vocabulary	EPS	K-6

All schools noted that they use guided reading books on all levels and trade books for both informational and narrative text. Other series that were mentioned less than three times included SABIS books (used by the schools managed by SABIS, including the International Academy schools), Reader's Workshop (Teacher's College/Columbia U), Read 180 Program, Reading Workshops, Storia, Literacy Place, Letter Work, After the Bell – all series from Scholastic Publishing, Montessori reading series, Junior Great Books, mythology books, and James Patterson Middle School Series.

For websites, the following were noted

Online Resource	Web address
Language 4 today (CCSS materials)	http://www.mariinc.com/
Raz Kids	http://www.raz-kids.com/main/Login
Brain POPJr and BrainPOP	http://www.brainpop.com/
Scholastic reading support	http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/
Read, Write and Think	http://www.readwritethink.org/
Library of Congress	http://www.loc.gov/teachers/
Storyline Online (stories read by famous people)	www.storylineonline.net
Learning A-Z	http://www.learninga-z.com/index.html

Mathematics

There was more consensus on mathematics curriculum than on reading. The top choices are shown below.

Name of Curriculum	Publisher	Grades	
Saxon Math	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	All grades	
Singapore Math	Singapore Math	All grades	
Envision Math	Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley	K-6	
Everyday Math	McGraw Hill	K-5	
Think Math	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	K-5	
Algebra series	Glencoe/McGraw Hill	6-8	
Prentice Hall Mathematics (Courses 1, 2, 3 and Algebra Readiness)	Pearson	6-8	
SRA Real Math	McGraw Hill	K-5	
Holt Mathematics Course	Holt, Rinehart and Winston	5-8	

Most respondents also mentioned how many manipulatives were being used in their classrooms, including Math Playground, Cuisenaire rods, number lines, etc.

Many schools mentioned the Khan Academy as a resource teachers frequently used for morning activities.

Resource	Website
Math Playground	http://www.mathplayground.com/index.html
Khan Academy	khanacademy.org
Resources for Everyday Math	http://everydaymath.uchicago.edu/teachers/
Illustrative Math	http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/
Inside Math	http://www.insidemathematics.org/
California Math Project resources and lessons	http://caccssm.cmpso.org/home

Writing

The preferred writing series was clearly 6+ 1 Trait and Lucy Calkins Writing programs used by more than half of the schools.

Books/Program	Publisher	Grades
6+1 Trait®	Education Northwest	K-8
Lucy Calkins Writing Program	Heinemann Books/ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt	K-8
MAISA CCSS writing units	http://oaklandk12-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Public/View/Default	K-8
Collins Writing	Collins Education Associates	K-8
Writer's Workshop	(Teacher's College, Columbia University/TCI	K-8
Strategies for Writers	Zaner Bloser	K-8
Write Steps Writing Program	WriteSteps	K-8
Montessori Writing Works	Montessori Materials	K-8

Three of the schools are using the state and MAISA- developed materials aligned to CCSS available at the Oakland ISD website listed.

Science

Science is dominated by three textbook series: Macmillan/McGraw Hill, Pearson/Prentice Hall, and Harcourt. A number of schools are using the Kent County produced Curriculum Crafter.

Curriculum materials	Publisher	Grades
Science Series Textbooks and workbooks	Macmillan/McGraw-Hill	1-8
Prentice Hall Science and Interactive Science	Pearson	All Grades, primarily 6-8
Harcourt Science	Harcourt School Publishers	All Grades
Kent County Curriculum Crafter	Kent ISD	K-8
Holt Science and Technology	Holt, Rinehart and Winston	6-8
Foss/Delta Science Kits, Montessori kits, other science kits	Foss Delta and others	1-5
Glencoe Science	McGraw-Hill	6-8

Social Studies

More than half the schools used materials from Teachers' Curriculum Institute. The McGraw Hill and Glencoe series are also used for middle school grades.

Curriculum materials	Publisher	Grades
Social Studies Alive; Geography Alive; History Alive; My World Social Studies; TCI online and TCI interactive	Teachers' Curriculum Institute	All grades
Communities Program; Social Studies series for all grades	McGraw Hill	6-8
World History: Journey Across Time: American History: The Early Ages; World Geography; American Journeys: the Modern Times	Glencoe	6-8
Houghton Mifflin series	Houghton Mifflin	All Grades
Early American History	Harcourt	5
World Studies Series and American Pathways	Prentice Hall	6-8
Scott Foresman Series	Scott Foresman	1-5

The following lists websites that were frequently mentioned and used for multiple subjects.

Website	About	Free or Subscription
http://www.brainpop.com/	Most cited resource to start the day	subscription
http://oaklandk12-public.rubiconatlas.org/Atlas/Public/View/Default	MAISA/state designed CCSS lesson plans, etc.	free
http://illustrativemathematics.org/standards/k8	Math materials aligned to CCSS	free
http://www.engageny.org/common-core-curriculum-assessments	New York's curriculum aligned to CCSS	free
http://www.odysseyware.com/	Odysseyware is an online curriculum for grades 3-12	Subscribe
http://www.discoveryeducation.com/administrators/curricular-resources/streaming/	Interactive digital texts, PD, assessment services,	Some free, much more subscription
http://www.skillstutor.com/hmh/site/skillstutor/Home	Skills Tutor linked to Houghton Mifflin (K-8) materials	subscription
http://readingeggs.com/	For learning to read	subscription
http://us.educationcity.com/	CCSS units for pre-K-6th language arts, math, science, and ESL.	subscription
http://www.renlearn.com/ccss/default.aspx	Accelerated Reading and Accelerated Math --online curriculum, linked to STARS assessments	subscription

How to Select Materials for Teaching to the Common Core

***** Read this first.** A toolkit for Evaluating Alignment of Instructional and Assessment Materials to the CCSS. The toolkit includes a complete set of tools to aid in the design and procurement of CCSS aligned instructional materials, including assessments.

<http://www.achievethecore.org/page/285/toolkit-content-list-page>

What Works Clearinghouse: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
WWC identifies studies that provide credible and reliable evidence of the effectiveness of a given practice, program, or policy (referred to as “interventions”), and disseminates summary information and reports on the WWC website.

California published a list of the math materials they approved,
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ma/im/mathreportsoffindings.asp>

Indiana’s review of mathematics texts,
<http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/curriculum/mathematics-textbook-reviews-2011>

North Carolina's How to evaluate math textbooks by grade, [\(CCSS\) Mathematics Curriculum Materials Analysis Project - NCSM](#)

What Oregon purchased by grade for ELA and Math,
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1565>

Note: The PSA Unit wishes to thank the following schools for responding to our survey and spending time sharing their stories of success with us: Merritt Academy, Mt. Clemens Montessori Academy, Global Preparatory Academy, Michigan Connections Academy, Charyl Stockwell Academy, Cole Academy, South Arbor Charter Academy, Vanguard Charter Academy, University Preparatory Science and Math Middle School, Star International Academy, Summit Academy, West Village Academy, Hamtramck Academy, Trillium Academy, International Academy of Saginaw, Martin Luther King, Jr. Education Center Academy, New Beginnings Academy, Walden Green Montessori, Concord Academy-Petoskey, Holly Academy, Grand Traverse Academy, Byron Center Charter School, Oakland Academy, Will Carleton Charter School Academy, Hillsdale Preparatory School, New Bedford Academy, Knapp Charter Academy, and Honey Creek Community School.